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ABSTRACT

This volume presents ideas for implementing prekindergarten programs in Texas. Published in response to state laws for prekindergarten education, it targets high-risk four-year-olds whose home environment or limited English might impede their success in school. The prekindergarten program stresses language development and developmentally appropriate activities to prepare children for kindergarten language requirements. This publication discusses the essential elements of the state curriculum: the development of communication, cognition, motor, fine arts, and social emotional skills. It presents rules for coordinating the program with existing programs like Head Start. Suggestions for classroom environments are presented, such as room selection, furnishings, and arrangement. Sample classroom floor plans are offered. The publication presents the concept of learning centers, areas of the classroom containing materials and equipment chosen to facilitate specific developmental activities. Correlation charts are provided, illustrating specific correspondences between the developmental purpose of each center and equipment required. The volume also provides much information on the requirements of limited English students, including the need for bilingual teachers and appropriate teaching materials. A bibliography on English as a second language is provided. (HOD)

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A Guide for Prekindergarten Education

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Priority '86

A Guide for Prekindergarten Education

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Texas Education Agency
Austin, Texas

Foreword

Since the early part of this decade, the state of Texas has targeted education reform above all issues. Among the reforms generated by the 68th Texas Legislature in 1983 was the emerging recognition of the importance of early childhood education for certain high-risk kindergarten students. The summer of 1984 brought a special session and the housekeeping measures of House Bill 72. At that time, the legislature mandated prekindergarten education for high-risk four-year olds in Texas public schools.

The legislature enacted these measures for early childhood education with earnestness: Drastic steps were needed to curb costly remediation and school failure in the later grades. The intent of the legislation is to break this debilitating cycle by building a solid foundation of school successes among four-year-olds.

Priority '86: A Guide for Prekindergarten Education describes and provides ideas for implementing the state prekindergarten program. We hope the publication is relevant and useful to school districts with prekindergarten plans or programs in progress.

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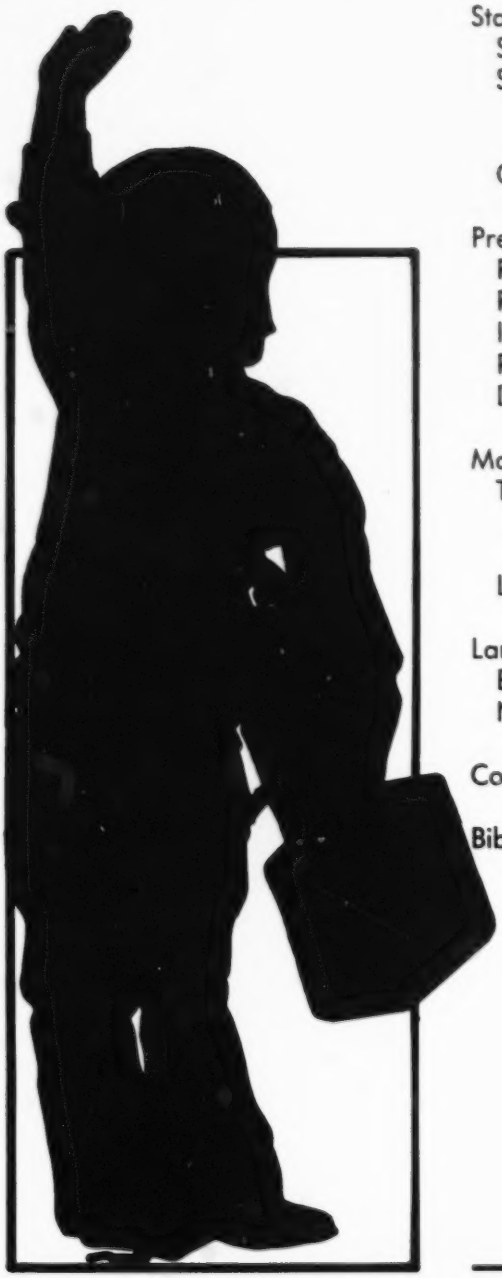

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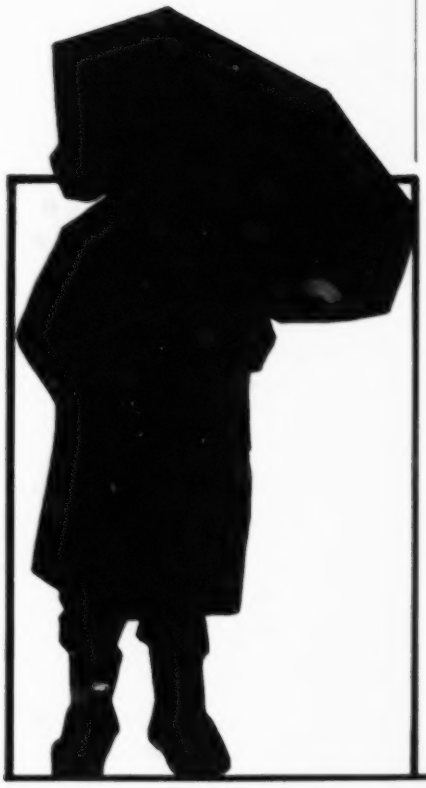
Introduction

Leading educators say a child's early years are a period of rapid growth, during which key concepts related to future academic success are developed.

Long-range studies clearly document the value of early training for young children. These studies show that young adults who attended a high-quality preschool program demonstrated greater gains in education, employment, and social responsibility than similar young adults who did not attend preschool.

Prekindergarten education in Texas is state-mandated and funded for students whose home environment or limited English might impede their success in school and in life. Through prekindergarten experiences, many of these children may avoid the downward spiral of academic failure and inevitable dropout.



The prekindergarten program described in this publication stresses intensive language development. It focuses on developmentally appropriate learning activities that prepare children for the language requirements of kindergarten.

State Prekindergarten Program

State Law

The law for prekindergarten education, enacted in May 1985, is stated in the Texas Education Code, Section 21.136.

Legal requirements

- Any school district may offer prekindergarten classes, but a district shall offer prekindergarten classes if the district identifies 15 or more eligible children.
- To be eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten class, a child must be at least four years of age and must be:
  - unable to speak and comprehend the English language, or
  - from a family whose income, according to standards set by the State Board of Education, is at or below subsistence level.
- Prekindergarten classes shall be operated on a half-day basis. A district is not required to provide transportation for prekindergarten classes, but transportation, if provided, is included for funding purposes as part of the regular transportation system.
- On application of a school district, the commissioner of education may exempt a district from the application of this section if the district would be required to construct classroom facilities in order to provide prekindergarten classes.
- The cost of the program is shared by the state and district in the same percentages used to determine the state/local shares under Chapter 16 of this code. The state's share is paid from the foundation school fund and may not exceed $50 million a year. If that amount will not fully fund the program, the commissioner shall proportionately reduce each district's allocations.
- This section becomes effective with the 1985-86 school year.

State Board of Education

To implement the law, the State Board of Education adopted the following rules for Title 19, Chapter 75 of the Texas Administrative Code.

Rules for Implementation

Eligibility requirements

- To determine eligibility for students who do not speak and comprehend the English language, school districts shall:
  - administer home language surveys, and
  - screen students using informal oral inventories, adaptations of oral proficiency instruments approved by the commissioner of education, or other appropriate commercially developed instruments.
- To determine eligibility for a student who comes from a family whose annual income is at or below subsistence, school districts shall apply the formula used to qualify students for free or reduced-price lunches under the national school lunch program.

Minimum time. The minimum time for the operation of prekindergarten classes on a half-day basis shall be three hours.

Student/teacher ratio. Beginning with the 1985-86 school year, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a prekindergarten class. This requirement shall not apply during the last 12 weeks of any school year.

Bilingual or ESL programs. The program may be bilingual or English as a second language (ESL). Prekindergarten programs for students who will be in bilingual education kindergarten programs shall be bilingual education.

Waivers. The commissioner of education may waive the requirements for implementation of the prekindergarten program. When requesting a waiver, the district shall comply with the following requirements:

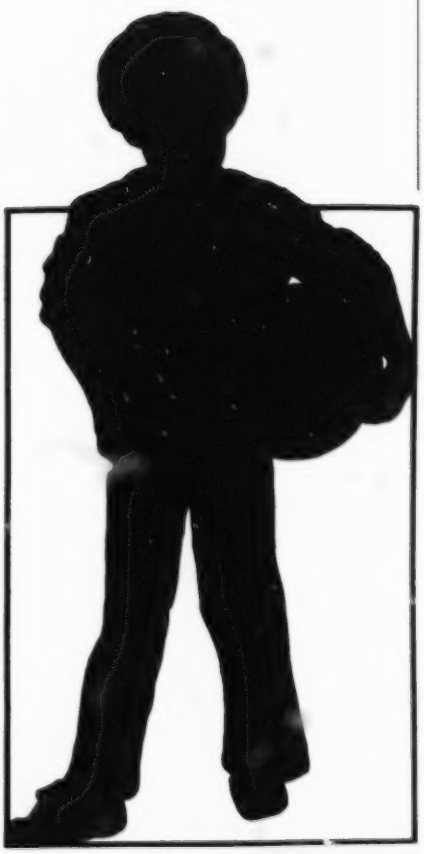
- The district shall demonstrate to the commissioner of education that the district has no suitable classroom space available and the district has made all reasonable efforts to obtain additional classroom space. This review of additional space shall include all campuses and the possible conversion of existing space from other uses.

- The district shall submit a plan showing the steps the district will take to correct the lack of facilities. The plan shall include the timeline by which the district intends to come into compliance with the program implementation requirements in the Texas Education Code, §21.136, Prekindergarten.

Assignment of teachers. Teachers who provide instruction in prekindergarten programs shall possess certification or an endorsement in at least one of the following categories: early childhood education, teacher of young children, kindergarten, elementary with bilingual or English as a second language (ESL), elementary, or vocational home economics with kindergarten endorsement.

Funding for prekindergarten.

- Available funds appropriated by the legislature from the foundation school program for the support of programs provided under the Texas Education Code, Section 21.136, shall be allocated to school districts in accordance with this subsection. The commissioner of education shall ratably reduce each district's allotment for the prekindergarten program if funds are not available to fund the program fully.
- Funding for the program shall be calculated using the participating district's basic allotment as adjusted by the price differential index and small district formula, if applicable, and the average daily attendance (ADA) of students served in this program as prescribed in the Texas Education Code, Section 16.006. The cost of the program is to be shared by the state and district in the same percentage used to determine the state/local shares under the Texas Education Code, Chapter 16.
- For purposes of calculating program funding, each prekindergarten student in ADA shall receive a weight of .75. Prekindergarten students are not to be included in counts for bilingual or compensatory education funding under Section 77.362 of this title (relating to Bilingual Education Allotment) or Section 89.191 of this title (relating to State Compensatory Education Allotment).
- Districts shall apply to the commissioner of education for funding of prekindergarten programs operated under this subsection. Applications for funding shall contain an estimate of the number of students who will participate in the program and other information necessary to assure the commissioner that programs will be operated in accordance with the guidelines specified in this subsection.



As amended by the State Board of Education in March 1985, the state curriculum now includes prekindergarten elements and subelements. They are divided into these five areas: communication development, cognition development, motor development, fine arts, and social emotional development.

Essential Elements

Prekindergarten Education

Communication development, prekindergarten. Communication development, prekindergarten, shall include the following essential elements:

- *Listening (receptive language).* The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - respond to simple directions, commands, and questions;
  - recognize and compare familiar and unfamiliar environmental sounds including sounds of animals, motors, musical instruments, and nature;
  - acquire the meaning of vocabulary words related to concepts being presented;
  - listen to literary selections daily for personal enjoyment;
  - become aware of various speech sounds and patterns through rhymes, poems, chants, and fingerplays;
  - respond to storytelling or oral reading by telling what the story is about, recalling facts and details, and recalling the sequence of events;
  - focus attention on a speakèr without interruption; and
  - recognize voice tone as a way to express feeling.
- *Speaking (expressive language).* The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - participate in nonverbal communication through gesture, pantomime, and facial expression;
  - use a variety of words to express feelings and ideas;
  - talk about what is seen, heard, touched, tasted, or smelled as objects, people, and events are experienced;
  - engage in a conversation by sharing ideas with others;
  - dictate ideas and feelings as they are recorded;
  - retell a familiar story or nursery rhyme;
  - speak clearly;
  - present fingerplays; and
  - use oral language in a variety of situations.

Cognition development, prekindergarten. Cognition development, prekindergarten, shall include the following essential elements:

- *Identifying*. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - match objects in a one-to-one correspondence such as a cup to saucer, napkin to plate (mathematics);
  - orally identify the number of objects in a group (mathematics);
  - recognize the empty set (concept of zero: mathematics);
  - discuss ways people can help each other (social studies);
  - know and practice rules of safety at home and school (social studies, science);
  - learn social skills appropriate to group behavior (social studies);
  - identify basic economic wants of people (food, clothing, shelter: social studies);
  - discuss how and why people celebrate special events, including those that are culturally related (birthdays, holidays: social studies);
  - know and observe rules of the home, classroom, and school (social studies);
  - know terms related to direction and location (up/down, near/far, above/below: social studies);
  - identify individuals who help students learn (family members, teachers: social studies);
  - demonstrate awareness of self in terms of name, age, and gender (social studies);
  - discuss what families do together (play, work: social studies);
  - use the senses to gain information about the environment using taste, smell, touch, sight, and sound (science); and
  - describe phenomena in the environment (science).
- *Comparing and contrasting*. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - use vocabulary to designate quantities such as more than, less than, equal to, as many as (mathematics);

- use vocabulary to designate relationships such as under, over, above, below, in front of, far away from (mathematics);
- learn the vocabulary to compare sets or groups (same as, different from, alike: mathematics);
- demonstrate concepts of part and whole with manipulative materials (mathematics);
- use vocabulary to compare objects (taller/shorter, heavier/lighter: social studies, science, mathematics); and
- compare similarities and differences among objects using taste, smell, touch, sight, and sound (science).

- *Classifying*. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - form groups by sorting and matching objects according to their attributes (mathematics);
  - combine and separate groups of objects to form new groups (mathematics);
  - identify property as "his/hers/mine/ours" (social studies);
  - classify acceptable/unacceptable behavior at home and school (social studies); and
  - sort objects from the environment according to one or more characteristics (use, composition, location: science).
- *Sequencing and ordering*. The student shall be provided opportunites to:
  - repeat a simple pattern using objects (mathematics);
  - order two or three objects by size (length, height: mathematics);
  - count orally (mathematics);
  - describe sequences in basic family and school routines (social studies); and
  - sequence events in order of their occurrence (science).
- *Predicting cause/effect relationships*. The student shall be provided opportunities to know and discuss the consequences of actions in social relationships (sharing, hitting, disturbing others: social studies).

Motor development, prekindergarten. Motor development, prekindergarten, shall include the following essential elements:

- *Physical fitness development to improve the quality of life.* The student shall be provided opportunities to participate in developmental activities related to muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and cardiorespiratory endurance.
- *Motor skills that develop positive body image and confidence.* The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - acquire fundamental movement skills;
    - locomotor (walking, running, jumping, hopping);
    - nonlocomotor (bending and stretching, pushing and pulling, twisting and turning);
    - manipulative (working with bean bags, large balls, long ropes); and
    - posture and body mechanics (standing, sitting, falling safely).
  - develop fine motor skills:
    - practice self-help skills (zippering, buttoning, lacing, buckling, snapping, and pouring liquids and solids such as sand and rice);
    - develop pincher control (working puzzles with large pieces, folding paper, screwing/unscrewing, working with clothespins, punching holes, picking up small objects and placing in containers); and
    - formulate patterns (using hand or foot in the air, sand, string beads).
  - develop perceptual awareness skills:
    - body awareness (an awareness of name, location, and relationship of body parts);
    - spatial and directional awareness (an awareness of how much space the body occupies and where to move);
    - coordination (eye-hand, eye-foot, rhythm); and
    - balance.
- *Rhythmic activities that develop coordination, self-expression, creativity, and endurance.* The student shall be provided opportunities to participate in rhythmic activities:
  - fundamental skills;

- creative rhythms; and
- singing games.

- *Skills related to games and sports*. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - participate in skills common to games and sports (starting, stopping, dodging, throwing, kicking, catching);
  - participate in cooperative games; and
  - develop and practice behavior reflective of good sportsmanship and safety.
- *Skills and activities related to sequential gymnastics*. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - develop gross motor skills;
  - develop preliminary gymnastic skills (creeping, crawling, rolling, and balancing); and
  - develop the ability to use apparatus appropriate for prekindergarten.

Fine arts, prekindergarten. Fine arts, prekindergarten, shall include the following essential elements:

- *Art*.
  - Awareness and sensitivity to natural and man-made environments. The student shall be provided opportunities to discover line, color, shape, and texture by seeing and feeling objects.
  - Inventive and imaginative expression through art materials and tools. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
    - experiment informally with a variety of simple media; and
    - express individual thoughts and feelings through picture making, puppetry, modeling, constructing, and printmaking.
  - Understanding and appreciation of self and others through art culture and heritage. The student shall be provided opportunities to look at and talk about artworks including primary sources.

- *Music.*
  - Singing concepts and skills. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
    - create vocal sounds by imitating; and
    - sing songs.
  - Music listening. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
    - hear music for quiet listening; and
    - hear music that tells a story.
  - Responses to music through moving and playing. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
    - move and dance; and
    - play simple rhythm and/or melody instruments.
- *Theater arts.*
  - Expressive use of the body and voice. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
    - develop body awareness and spatial perception using rhythmic and imitative movement; and
    - imitate sounds.
  - Creative drama. The student shall be provided opportunities to dramatize limited-action stories and poems using simple pantomime and puppetry.

Social/emotional development, prekindergarten. Social/emotional development, prekindergarten, shall include the following essential elements:

- *Concepts and skills that foster individual personal health and safety.* The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - demonstrate self-help skills by:
    - being responsible for personal hygiene;
    - managing dress and undressing;
    - eating appropriately and independently;
    - learning about the parts of the body and what they do;

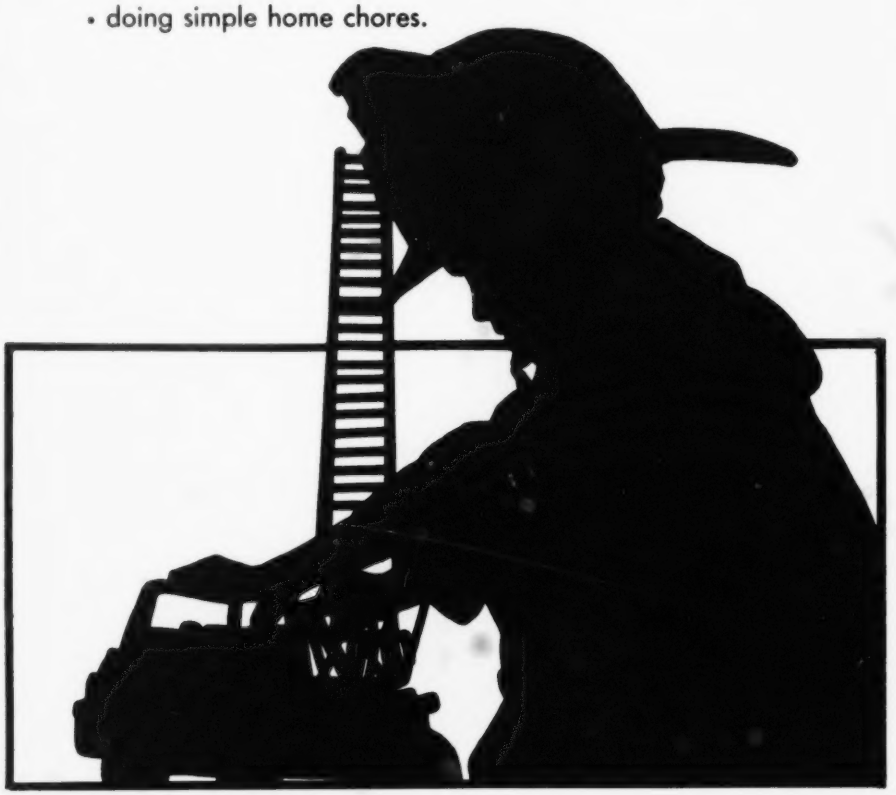
- recognizing routine healthy behaviors;
- expanding vocabulary to include health terms; and
- recognizing common visible signs of general illness and wellness.

- develop a healthy self-concept reflected by:
  - accepting own failures and successes;
  - praising good work and success of others;
  - willingness to try again after failure;
  - taking pride in own work;
  - willingness to try new things;
  - accepting constructive criticism;
  - respecting property of others;
  - recognizing own uniqueness;
  - reacting to change in a reasonable way;
  - becoming aware of how others see him or her; and
  - expressing strong emotions safely.
- recognize danger of poisonous substances, including drugs; and
- recognize hazards in the environment, and acquire knowledge and skills needed to avoid injury and to prevent accidents.

- *Health-related concepts and skills that involve interactions between individuals*. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
  - demonstrate adjustment to the school setting by:
    - accepting school routine;
    - recognizing that he or she is one of many; and

- participating in leadership as well as follower roles.

- demonstrate self-discipline by demonstrating appropriate independent as well as group behavior.
- observe and follow home/school safety rules and procedures by:
  - knowing what to do when lost;
  - staying away from medication and poisons;
  - knowing rules about crossing the street; and
  - knowing what to do when strange or familiar adults behave inappropriately (abuse).
- develop concept of family by:
  - recognizing that there are different types of families;
  - recognizing that each person is part of a family; and
  - doing simple home chores.



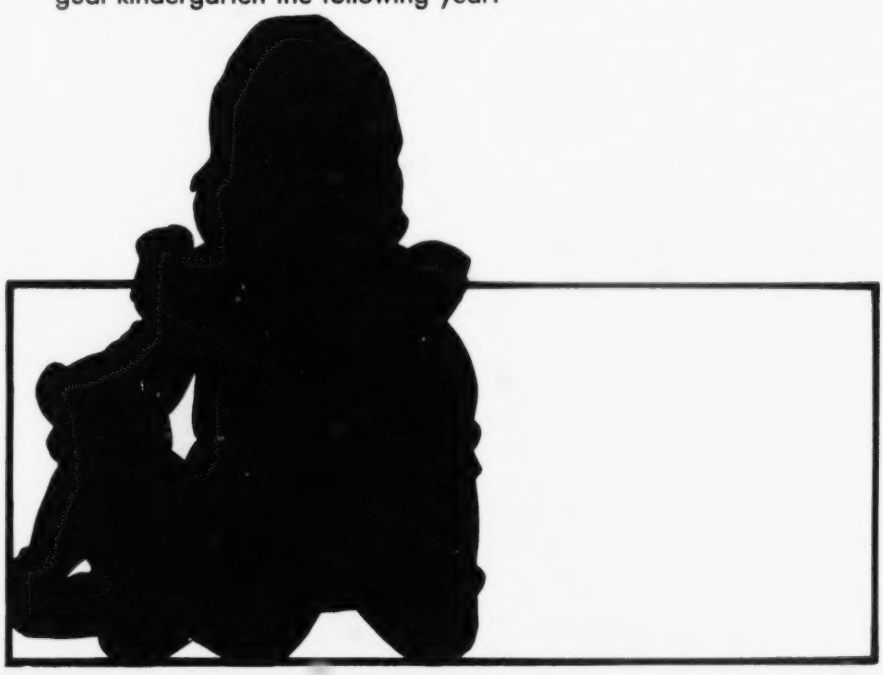
Coordinating with Other Programs

Where possible, school districts should coordinate the state prekindergarten program for four-year-olds with such existing programs as Head Start. Coordination in this instance could entail a certified teacher instructing children for three hours and Head Start personnel working with the same children for the remaining time.

Rules for Coordination

State requirements

- Teachers instructing the prekindergarten portion of the program must have a valid, appropriate Texas teacher's certificate.
- The student/teacher ratio must not exceed 22 to 1.
- Students must meet the eligibility requirements stated in Title 19, Section 75.141 of the Texas Administrative Code.
- The essential elements for prekindergarten must be taught.
- Measuring and reporting student progress is the district's responsibility.
- The minimum time for operating prekindergarten classes must be three hours.
- Students must enroll in a bilingual prekindergarten if enrolled in a bilingual kindergarten the following year.



Preparing the Classroom

Room Selection

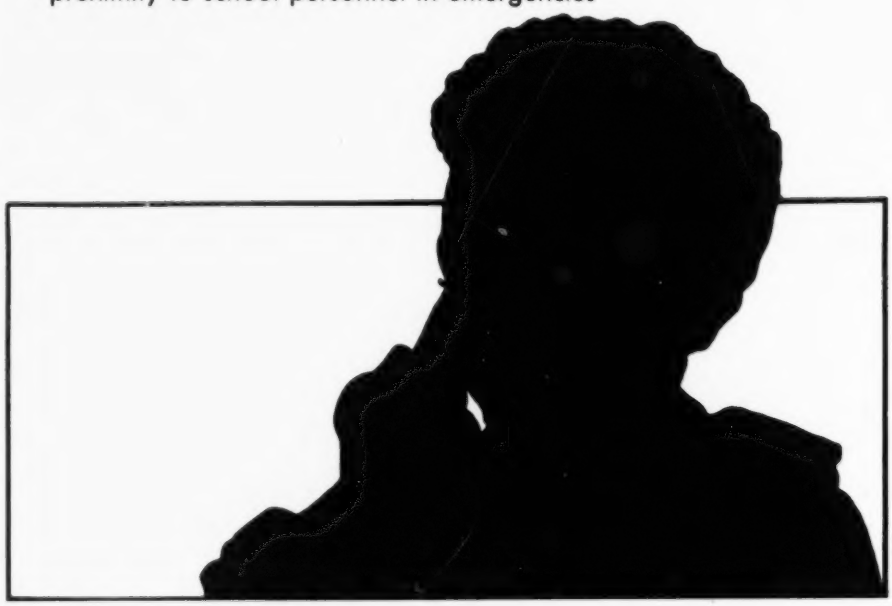
An appropriate classroom for four-year-old children is:

- spacious, and
- flexible

It is spacious enough to provide for large-group games and activities, as well as extensive experiences in learning centers, and flexible enough to provide for maximum physical and verbal interaction between the children and others in the environment.

In selecting an appropriate room for a prekindergarten program, consider:

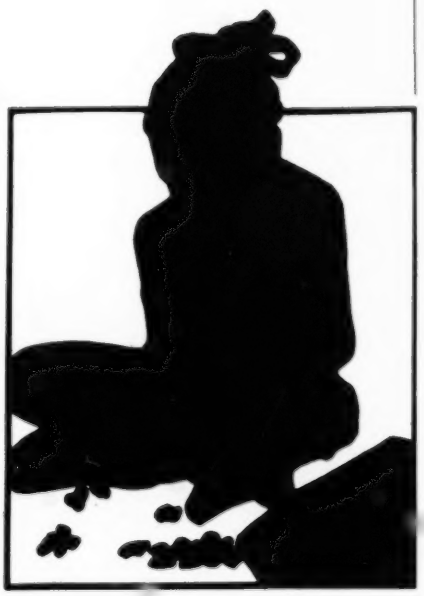
- availability of water
- availability of restrooms
- proximity to an outdoor exit
- proximity to school personnel in emergencies

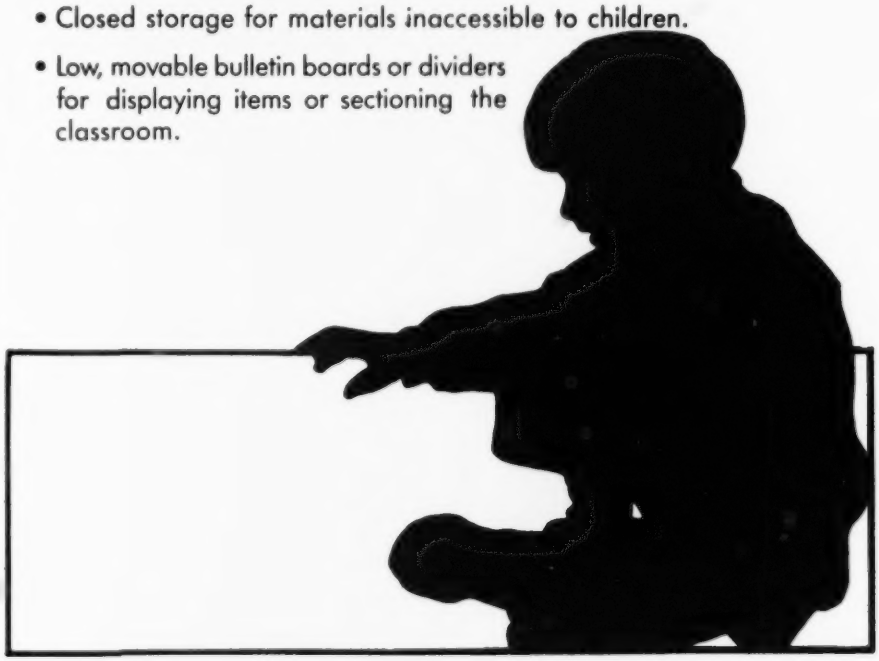


Room Furnishings

The open space of a prekindergarten classroom will have boundaries naturally created by room furnishings. They may include low shelving, rugs, storage cabinets, tables, bulletin boards, and room dividers. Desks are unnecessary in such a classroom; furniture designed for paper and pencil instruction should be scarce. All furnishings for four-year-olds should be safe, durable, adaptable, and easy to clean. Suggested items include:

- Shelving that provides cubbyholes in which children store materials. These cubbies can be as simple as milk cartons or plastic dish pans.
- Low tables (20-22 inches high) for displaying materials.
- At least one area rug for large group instruction. In carpeted classrooms, an area may be marked with tape.
- Low chairs (10-14 inches high) to serve at least one small group of children. A chair for every child is not necessary.
- Low, open shelving for storing and displaying books and manipulative materials.
- Closed storage for materials inaccessible to children.
- Low, movable bulletin boards or dividers for displaying items or sectioning the classroom.



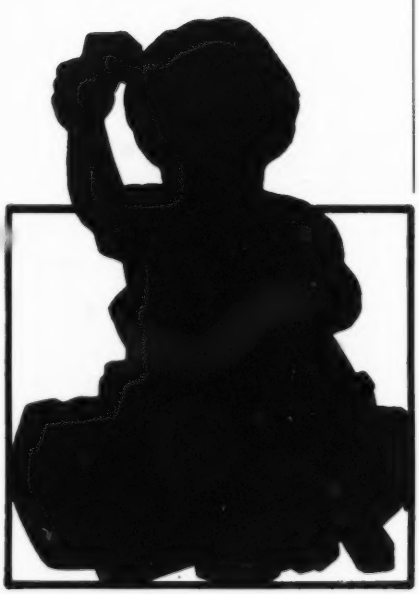


Instructional Materials

Instructional materials for a prekindergarten classroom need not be purchased. Students' homes and other community resources are excellent sources for boxes, kitchen utensils, dress-up clothing, magazines, and many other items. Appropriate materials are as unlimited as a creative teacher's imagination. However, they should be thoughtfully selected to encourage growth of concepts and broadening of experiences.

Nonconsummable materials that should be obtained include:

- Building blocks
- Puzzles with large, interlocking pieces
- Sturdy transportation toys like cars and trucks
- Child-sized kitchen appliances and furniture
- Nonbreakable pots, pans, and dishes
- Toy telephones
- Doll bed and dolls
- Dress-up clothing
- Large pegs and peg boards
- Jumbo beads and strings
- Cassette player or record player with headphones to accommodate a small group
- Plastic or wooden figures of people and animals
- Items to practice zippering, buttoning, and snapping
- Story records and tapes
- Colorful books with large illustrations and print



Consummable materials that should be provided include:

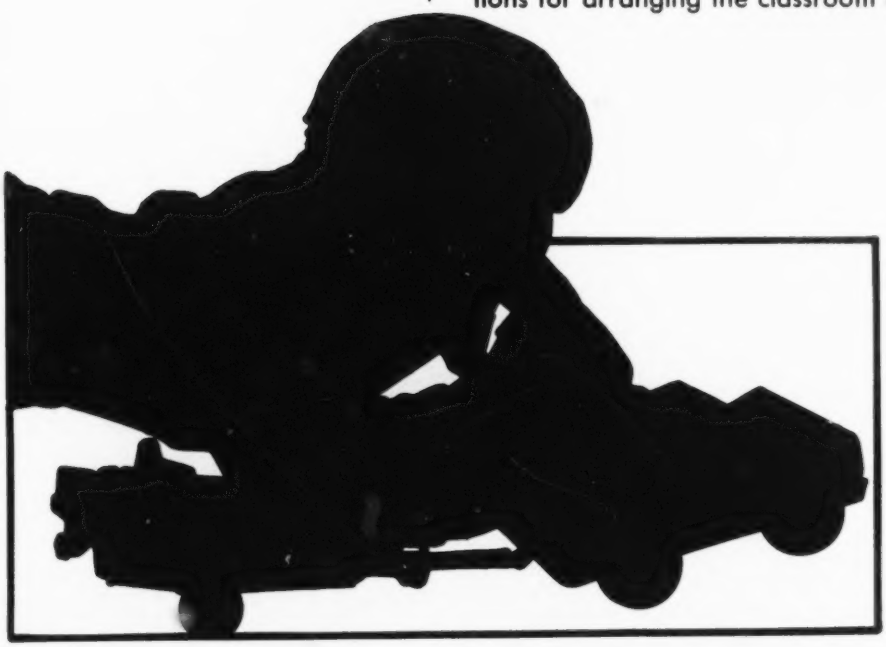
- Clay
- Tempera paint and brushes
- Paper (newsprint, construction, paper sacks)
- White glue

Room Arrangement

A prekindergarten classroom should be arranged to guide children effectively through activities that support mastery of the essential elements. Such subelements as "discover line, color, shape and texture by seeing and feeling objects," will help teachers set up appropriate centers. The number of centers, however, is less important than the effective use of space. Centers should be arranged to maintain an open atmosphere and provide for the flow of traffic. A variety of interesting materials distributed evenly in centers located throughout the room will help prevent crowding.

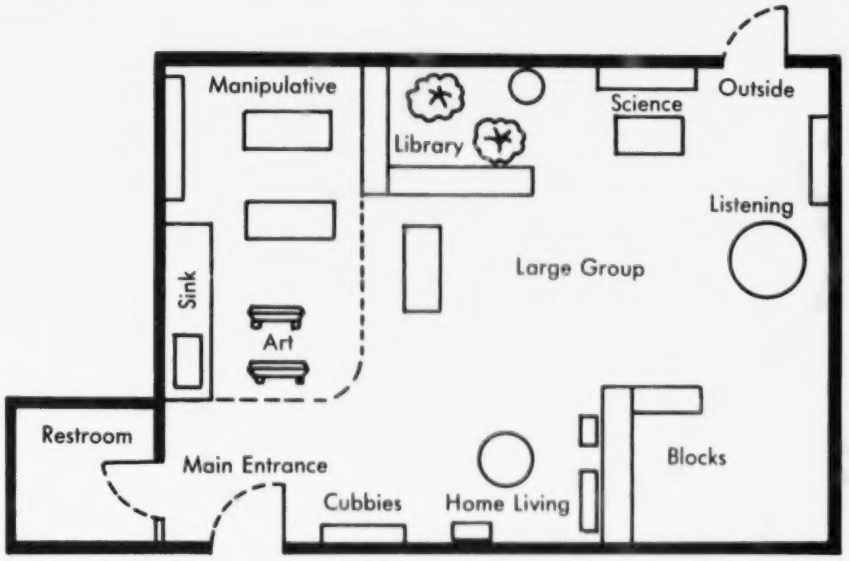
Because appropriate behavior is encouraged by the placement of room furnishings, how space is organized directly affects the quality of instruction children receive. Children looking at books in the quiet library center should not be distracted because the more active block center has mistakenly been placed next to them. Nor should the carpet area for large-group instruction be placed next to displayed manipulative materials that divert attention from the teacher.

Sample room arrangements are provided on page 18. Further suggestions for arranging the classroom appear on pages 22 and 23.



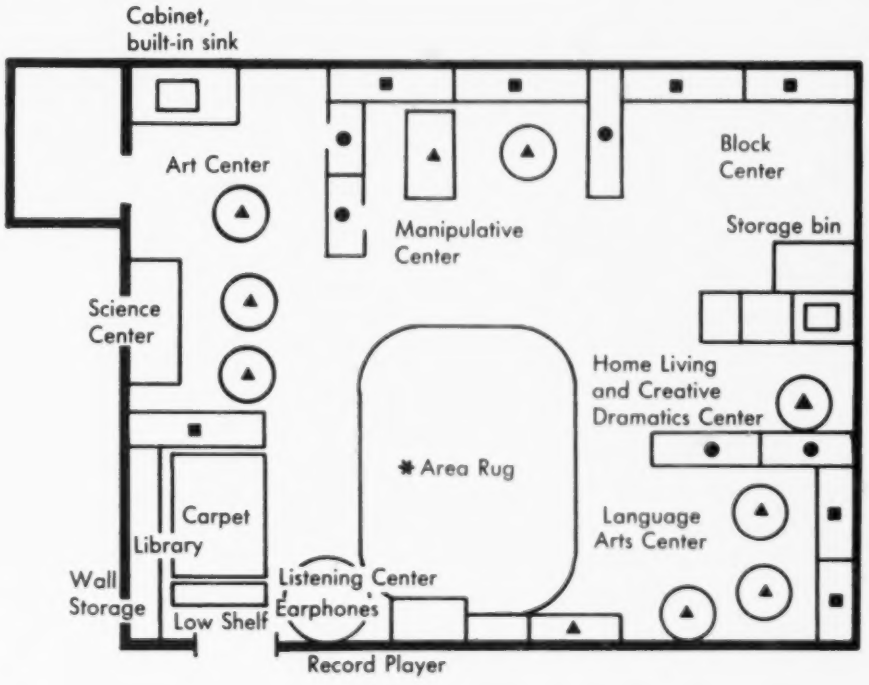
Prekindergarten Classrooms

Sample One



Sample Two

- ● Low shelves
- ■ Standard-size shelves
- ▲ Table
- ✱ Students may work on the large rug with manipulative materials that are appropriate for rug area work.



Daily Schedules

Because time usage by the prekindergarten teacher is not designated in State Board of Education rules, teachers can schedule the school day in any way that allows for adequate instruction of the essential elements. The elements can be addressed in learning centers or in group instruction conducted by the teacher. Planned experiences and activities that actively involve children should be emphasized and not the completion of tasks.

The daily schedule must balance teacher-directed and child-selected activities. Knowing how the essential elements correlate with various learning centers is crucial if the teacher is to provide this balance. Detailed information is provided in the chapter titled "Correlation of Learning Centers and Essential Elements," beginning on page 30. A schedule that effectively addresses the essential elements must also address the physical and emotional needs of four-year-old children. The teacher must consider balancing small- and large-group, structured and unstructured, and quiet and noisy activities.

In addition, the daily schedule should also be flexible enough to not only allow, but provide for special activities and events. Because four-year-olds respond positively to consistency, however, they should be well prepared for impending changes in routine.

Even when the above factors have been considered, the day may still not flow smoothly if proper attention is not given to transitional activities. While these activities may not appear in the written schedule, they are an important part of classroom operation. If confusion prevails when children move from learning centers to a large-group activity, or vice versa, valuable teaching time will be lost each day. Effective transitional activities include finger plays, songs, and games.

Although the legislature provides funds for only a half-day program, some districts may find it necessary or desirable to provide a full-day program. Therefore, examples of both half-day and full-day schedules are provided in this guide. Individual teacher preferences and local building requirements may dictate certain elements of the schedule, like outside playtime.

Prekindergarten Daily Schedule

Sample One

Half-day Program

15 minutes	Opening exercises/sharing
*75 minutes	Center activities/teacher-directed, small-group instruction
20 minutes	Outside play
20 minutes	Quiet activity/listening
35 minutes	Flexible scheduling: teacher-directed, large-group instruction/optional centers
15 minutes	Closing exercises
3 hours	

Sample Two

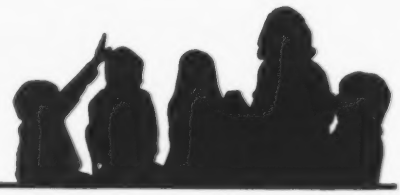
Full-day Program

20 minutes	Opening exercises/sharing
75 minutes	Center activities/teacher-directed, small-group instruction
30 minutes	Outside play
15 minutes	Story
25 minutes	Quiet activity/music appreciation
15 minutes	Clean up and lunch preparation
30 minutes	Lunch
**70 minutes	Rest/bathroom
75 minutes	Center activities
30 minutes	Outside play
10 minutes	Story
10 minutes	Routine cleanup
15 minutes	Closing exercises
7 hours	

*Time spent in each center will vary with number of centers.

**Some children may require a longer rest.

Managing the Classroom



The Learning Center Concept

Learning centers are an effective way to provide growth experiences for four-year-old children in a relatively unstructured manner. A learning center is simply an area in the classroom that contains a collection of manipulative materials and equipment. Items should be chosen to teach, reinforce, and enrich skills and concepts related to the essential elements for prekindergarten. As the needs of the children change, centers should change.

In each learning center, the teacher creates conditions that motivate learning. Understanding the relationship between the equipment and materials available in the classroom and the skills and concepts children need to develop is crucial. This relationship determines the specific activities for a center. Careful planning means the difference between centers that provide only busywork and those that provide for effective learning.

All centers do not require specific directions. However, discussion about the care and use of materials available in a center should be recognized as an important part of language development. Such discussion may be particularly useful in developing and reinforcing cognitive skills addressed in the essential elements. For limited English students, activities may be provided in the first language or in English. Both English and the first language of the children should be used daily, but only one language at a time should be used for each activity.

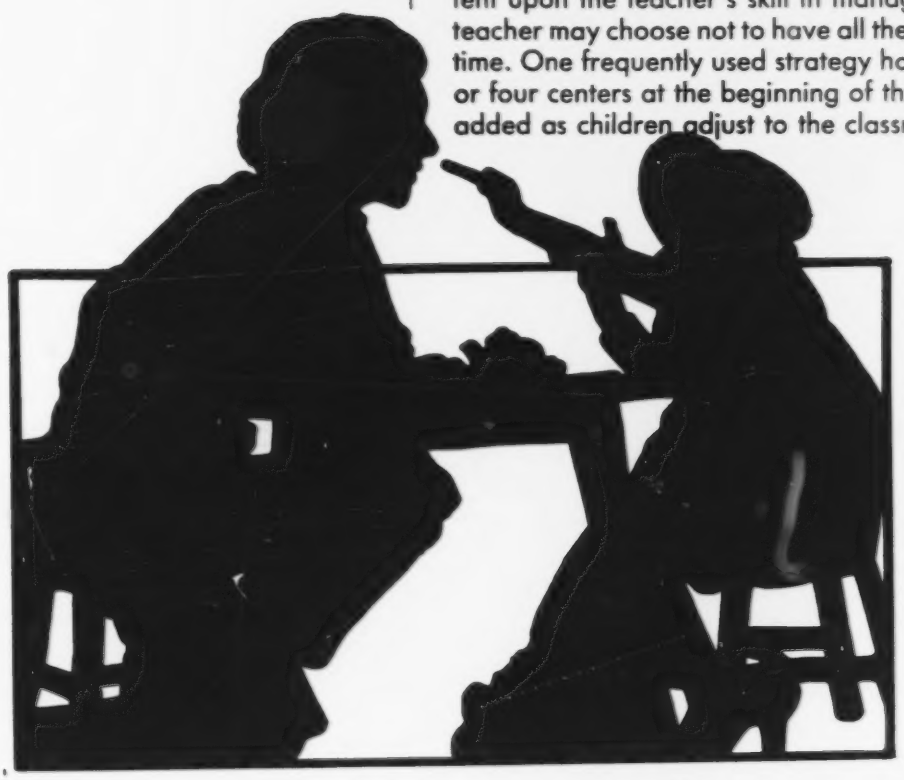
The correct use of classroom equipment should be demonstrated to four-year-old children to ensure their safety. In a bilingual prekindergarten class, equipment use and classroom safety should be discussed in a language the children understand.

Learning Centers

Learning centers focus on a variety of developmental activities ranging from stringing beads in a manipulative center to arranging a collection of shells in a science center. Eight of the more commonly used centers are listed below:

- Home living and creative dramatics
- Block
- Manipulative
- Science
- Listening
- Art
- Library
- Language Arts

The number of centers in operation simultaneously depends to a large extent upon the teacher's skill in managing center activities. However, a teacher may choose not to have all the above centers in operation at one time. One frequently used strategy has the teacher introduce only three or four centers at the beginning of the year. Centers are subdivided or added as children adjust to the classroom routine.



Managing Learning Centers

The learning center concept requires a simple, but carefully planned management system. Once implemented, few changes should be made throughout the course of the school year. The objective is to create a classroom in which children move easily from one area to another.

One popular system for managing children and materials within centers uses pictures. Center areas are labeled with simple, appropriate pictures, such as animals or story book characters. Shelves are also marked with pictures that indicate where materials are to be stored. Word labels may be placed beside the pictures, but no emphasis should be placed on learning to read the words. The system helps children keep track of specific materials and in addition, they gradually begin to associate meaning with printed words.

Another management system involves color coding materials. Each center is assigned a color: red for block center, green for manipulative center, for example. All materials and equipment are tagged with a small colored card or symbol that tells the children where the object belongs.

Wooden or cardboard tags strung with cord can also be used to label and manage centers. Each tag bears a picture representing a center or is color coded to the center. The tags are hung on wall hooks beneath matching pictures representing centers. If four children are to work at the manipulative center, there will be four tags hanging on the manipulative center hook. Children select a tag and hang it about their neck. As children finish tasks at a center, they return their tags to the proper hook and select another.

Any of these systems of center management can be used when the teacher is assigning an activity or when the children are free to choose an activity. If the teacher is assigning children to specific centers, cards or tags are distributed to them. If children are free to choose a center, the tags or cards remain in the centers. When all tags are gone, the center is filled.

In summary, center *management* requires:

- visual identifiers for each center
- visual markers to aid in storing materials
- infrequent change.

Large-Group Instruction

Short periods of large-group instruction are both necessary and desirable for prekindergarten students. Such instruction allows the teacher to communicate common information efficiently and helps children develop communication and social skills.

When gathered as a group, children have opportunities to speak before others and listen in a structured setting. The teacher can build listening

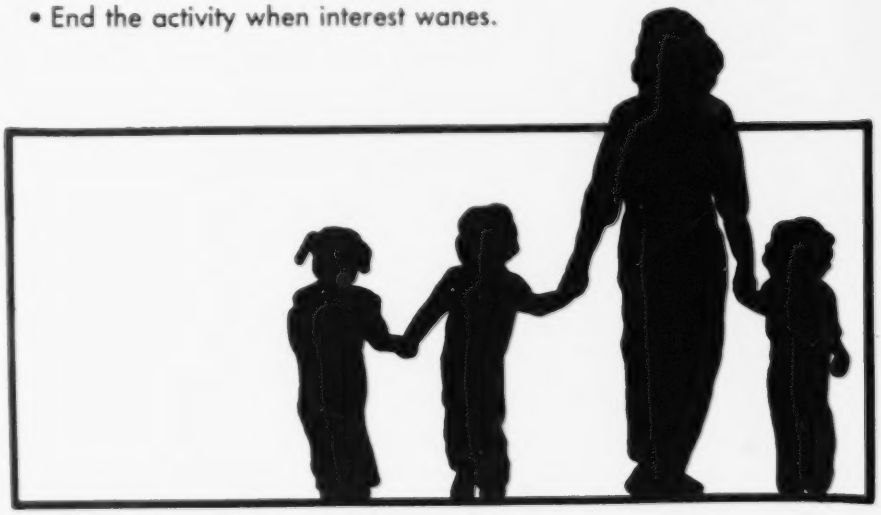
skills by asking children to respond to directions or questions in a physical, as well as verbal, manner. Waving, clapping, or swaying to music are examples of physical responses.

In such groups, children begin to feel part of the class and of school as a whole. These feelings of belonging lay the groundwork for good citizenship and patriotism. Activities that combine social and communication skills may also teach cooperation, an important aspect of friendship. Singing or reciting a finger play in unison are examples of cooperative behavior.

When children gather, they should be seated in a small but uncrowded area. Area rugs premarked with colored squares for each child can be purchased, or the same effect can be achieved by using masking tape to designate spaces on a carpet or floor.

A general checklist for managing large-group instruction is given below:

- Plan ahead. Have materials ready.
- Give children a place of their own to sit.
- Use finger plays and songs as transition activities to maintain the group's attention.
- Limit large-group instruction to 15 minutes or less, depending on interests of children.
- Involve children in more than just listening.
- End the activity when interest wanes.



Language Use For Limited English Students

Many children enrolled in prekindergarten classes speak or hear a language other than English at home. These children must be enrolled in a bilingual prekindergarten if they are scheduled to enroll in a bilingual kindergarten the following year. Instruction is provided in the home language and English, using second language methods.

Bilingual Teachers

Bilingual classroom teachers introduce and reinforce all concepts in a child's native language. This approach allows a child to build concepts using language already acquired. To provide instruction in the essential elements, teachers should include activities using such concrete objects as toys, puppets, kitchen utensils, and manipulatives. Group singing, finger plays, puppets, word games, dramatizations, and storytelling are appropriate language activities.

At home, natural language develops by talking with the family. When talking to young children, family members speak clearly and may demonstrate a concept or show an object being named. Children are unaware that they are developing language. They learn language quickly and effortlessly by imitating others and are rewarded with praise. These approaches can also be used in the classroom to continue the development of the first language.

In school, bilingual teachers use the language a child knows in order to build formal or school language. Teachers frequently combine language activities with mathematics, science, or social studies activities. However, first language and English should never be mixed during the instruction of a single concept. Such alternation tends to confuse children and delay development in both languages. Concepts mastered in the first language are transferred to English only when children have developed sufficient English vocabulary.

Modeling First Language and English as a Second Language (ESL)

To facilitate language development, teachers of bilingual classes must model:

- the first language—to help children develop formal language from natural language, and

- English—to help children develop natural conversational English. (Conversational English can be developed into school or formal language later on.)

To make English acquisition as near natural as possible, the following teaching aids can be used:

- picture cards
- story records and tapes
- manipulatives
- films and film strips

Non-Bilingual Teachers

In cases where a bilingual teacher is not available, essential elements should be introduced using ESL methods that mirror the natural development of language. Some examples of instructional techniques for non-bilingual teachers are:

- Speak slowly and act out simple statements to associate word meaning with body movement. For example, the teacher can act out sentences such as "I can sit in the chair," then have students act out similar sentences.
- Group concrete objects in learning centers to reinforce word labels. Manipulatives do not necessarily need to come from commercial sources. Familiar articles from home may be more effective.
- Use audiovisual materials like language masters for reinforcement. Slides, mobiles, and posters are also helpful.
- Use paraprofessionals to increase direct instructional time and individualize instruction. Teacher aides can help tutor and reinforce concepts introduced by the teacher.
- Encourage pupil talk at all times. Show and Tell discussions, in which children talk about their family and feelings, provide natural language development activity.
- Use activities to sharpen each of the five senses, particularly sight and hearing. These aid in the development of reading readiness skills.
- Use short sentences and simple words in storytelling. Pictorial illustrations help children remember new words.

- Introduce words for simple, familiar objects such as food, clothing, and parts of the body first. Other objects could include those found on field trips or in the classrooms.
- Use picture cards, wall charts, and books.
- Use records for group singing.
- Encourage parents to visit the classroom and participate in every way possible. By providing activities that reflect an appreciation of cultural heritage, parent-teacher partnerships can help children develop self-confidence and ultimately succeed in school.

Correlation of Learning Centers and Essential Elements

The following pages contain charts that correlate the essential elements to learning centers. A list of materials and equipment appropriate for each center is also included. Teachers are encouraged to add to this section as the school year progresses.

Essential elements will be mastered through participation in a variety of activities and centers. For example, one-to-one correspondence can be developed (1) in the block center as blocks are stacked one on another, (2) in the home living center as one napkin is placed with one plate, (3) in the science center as one seed is planted in one cup, or (4) in the manipulative center as one peg is placed in a hole.

The correlation charts do not match every essential element of the state prekindergarten curriculum with a learning center. Other centers may need to be developed and essential elements correlated to those centers. In addition, teachers should feel free to rearrange the suggested elements and materials within learning centers. Many elements will also be addressed effectively through teacher-directed, large-group instruction. Finally, if teachers wish to use this section of the guide for verifying instruction in the essential elements, more comprehensive correlation charts should be constructed.

Correlation Chart A

Home Living and Creative Dramatics Center	Appropriate Essential Elements and Subelements
Teacher Additions or Modifications	**Communication Development:** *Speaking (expressive language).* The student shall be provided opportunities to: • participate in nonverbal communicaton through gesture, pantomime, and facial expression • use a variety of words to express feelings and ideas • talk about what is seen, heard, touched, tasted, or smelled as objects, people, and events are experienced • engage in a conversation by sharing ideas with others • use oral language in a variety of situations **Fine Arts—Theater Arts:** *Expressive use of the body and voice.* The student shall be provided opportunities to: • develop body awareness and spatial perception using rhythmic and imitative movement • imitate sounds *Creative drama.* The student shall be provided opportunities to dramatize limited-action stories and poems using simple pantomime and puppetry.

Materials and Equipment

- Wooden, child-sized furniture (table and chairs, sink, cupboard, refrigerator, stove)
- Pots, pans, and other cooking utensils
- Iron and ironing board (child-size)
- Telephone with note pads
- Full-length mirror
- Dolls and doll clothes
- Appropriate props for units of study, such as musical instruments for music unit
- Plastic or metal dishes and silverware
- Broom, mop, dustpan, pail, sponge, and cleaning rags in small basket
- Dress-up clothes and shoes
- Adults' and children's shoes, shoe polish, and brushes
- Placemats, plastic place settings, silverware, napkins, and table centerpiece
- Plastic watering can and water for plants
- Box with recipe cards

Home Living and Creative Dramatics Center

Teacher Additions or Modifications

Correlation Chart B

Art Center	Appropriate Essential Elements and Subelements
Teacher Additions or Modifications	**Fine Arts—Art:** *Awareness of and sensitivity to natural and man-made environments*. The student shall be provided opportunities to discover line, color, shape, and texture by seeing and feeling objects. *Inventive and imaginative expression through art materials and tools*. The student shall be provided opportunities to: • experiment informally with a variety of simple media • express individual thoughts and feelings through picture making, puppetry, modeling, constructing, and printmaking *Understanding and appreciating self and others through art culture and heritage*. The student shall be provided opportunities to look at and talk about artwork, including primary sources.

Materials and Equipment	Art Center
• Table and chairs • Jumbo colored chalk and wax crayons • Newsprint, 12″× 18″ or 18″x 24″ (easel paper) • Finger paint and paper • Easels, large brushes, ½″, ¾″, and 1″ (flat-ended) • White drawing paper, 18″× 24″, 9″x 12″, 12″x 18″ • Clay, plastic and natural • Paste and glue (liquid or stick) • Scissors, blunt-ended (right and left handed) • Construction paper, 12″x 18″ assorted colors • Tempera paints (red, yellow, blue, white, black, green, brown, orange, purple, magenta) • Magazines with pictures • Gadgets for printing • Objects for clay impressions • Box of assorted materials for collages (fabrics, yarn) • Large scraps of wood	**Teacher Additions or Modifications**

Correlation Chart C

Manipulative Center	Appropriate Essential Elements and Subelements

Teacher Additions or Modifications	**Motor Development:**
	Motor skills that develop positive body image and confidence. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
	• develop fine motor skills:
	  • practice self-help skills (zippering, buttoning, lacing, buckling, snapping, and pouring liquids and solids like sand and rice)
	  • develop pincher control (working puzzles with large pieces, folding paper, screwing/unscrewing, working with clothespins, punching holes, and picking up small objects and placing in containers)
	  • formulate patterns (using hand or foot in the air or sand, stringing beads)
	• develop perceptual awareness skills:
	  • coordination (eye-hand, eye-foot, rhythm)
	Cognition Development:
	Identifying. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
	• match objects in a one-to-one correspondence like a cup to saucer, napkin to plate
	Classifying. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
	• combine and separate groups of objects to form new groups
	Sequencing and ordering. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
	• repeat a simple pattern using objects
	• order two or three objects by size (length, height)

Materials and Equipment

- Large peg and pegboards
- Large beads and shoelaces
- Plastic tweezers and small beads
- Clothespin games
- Interlocking blocks
- Puzzles
- Matching games
- Plastic clay
- Lacing cards
- Materials that allow students to practice zippering, buttoning
- Plastic pitcher with rice, sand, or water for pouring into another container

Manipulative Center

Teacher Additions or Modifications

Correlation Chart D

Language Art Center	Appropriate Essential Elements and Subelements
Teacher Additions or Modifications	**Communication Development:** *Listening (receptive language).* The student shall be provided opportunities to: • respond to simple directions, commands, and questions • acquire the meaning of vocabulary words related to concepts being presented • listen to literary selections daily for personal enjoyment **Cognition Development:** *Comparing and contrasting.* The student shall be provided opportunities to: • use vocabulary to designate relationships such as under, over, above, below, in front of, away from • learn the vocabulary to compare sets or groups (same as, different from, alike) • use vocabulary to compare objects (taller/shorter, heavier/lighter) • compare similarities and differences among objects using taste, smell, touch, sight, and sound • use vocabulary to designate quantities such as more than, less than, equal to, as many as

Materials and Equipment

- Large picture file that includes pictures of people, animals, food
- Small picture file that includes pictures of people
- Flannel board with flannel shapes, letters, and story characters
- Magnet board with letters and shapes
- Commercial or teacher-made matching and letter games
- Story sequence cards
- Sandpaper letter cards
- Materials such as construction paper, wall paper staplers, markers, crayons, and yarn to make books
- Typewriter and typing paper

Language Art Center

Teacher Additions or Modifications

Correlation Chart E

Block Center	Appropriate Essential Elements and Subelements

Teacher Additions or Modifications	**Communication Development:**
	Listening (receptive language). The student shall be provided opportunities to:
	• respond to simple directions, commands, and questions
	• recognize voice tone as a way to express feeling
	Motor Development:
	Motor skills that develop positive body image and confidence. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
	• acquire fundamental movement skills:
	  • locomotor (walking, running, jumping, hopping)
	  • nonlocomotor (bending and stretching, pushing and pulling, twisting and turning)
	  • manipulative (working with bean bags)
	  • posture and body mechanics (standing, sitting, falling safely)
	Social/Emotional Development:
	Concepts and skills that foster individual personal health and safety. The student shall be provided opportunities to:
	• develop a healthy self-concept reflected by:
	  • accepting failure as well as success
	  • praising good work and success of others
	  • willingness to try again after failure
	  • taking pride in own work
	  • willingness to try new things

Materials and Equipment

- Large hollow blocks
- Unit blocks
- Small plastic or wooden figures of people and animals (family and/or community worker sets)
- Picture file (building and construction)
- Large plastic tubs to be used as containers for accessories
- Wheeled cart for transporting blocks
- Interlocking blocks (large and small), logs and toys
- Small cars, trucks
- Scrapbooks for drawings of children's construction projects
- Posterboards cut for signs
- Felt markers

Block Center

Teacher Additions or Modifications

Correlation Chart F

Science Center	Appropriate Essential Elements and Subelements
Teacher Additions or Modifications	**Cognition Development:** *Identifying*. The student shall be provided opportunities to: • use the senses to gain information about the environment using taste, smell, touch, sight, and sound • describe phenomena in the environment *Comparing and contrasting*. The student shall be provided opportunities to: • use vocabulary to compare objects (taller/shorter, heavier/lighter) • Compare similarities and differences among objects using taste, smell, touch, sight, and sound *Classifying*. The student shall be provided opportunities to: • form groups by sorting and matching objects according to their attributes • combine and separate groups of objects to form new groups • sort objects from the environment according to one or more characteristics (use, composition, location)

Materials and Equipment	Science Center

• Aquarium
• Small animals with cages (gerbil, hamster, birds)
• Large magnifying glass, small magnifying boxes
• Magnets, scales, mirrors, prisms, pulleys, wheels, batteries
• Collections
  • rocks and minerals
  • shells
  • leaves
  • insects
  • bones
  • wheels
  • seeds
• Materials for feeling, smelling, tasting
• Collections of insects, bones
• Microscopes
• Seeds, soil, small pots
	Teacher Additions or Modifications

Correlation Chart G

Listening Center	Appropriate Essential Elements and Subelements
Teacher Additions or Modifications	**Communication Development:** *Listening (receptive language).* The student shall be provided opportunities to: • respond to simple directions, commands, and questions • recognize and compare familiar and unfamiliar environmental sounds including sounds of animals, motors, musical instruments, and nature • listen to literary selections daily for personal enjoyment • become aware of various speech sounds and patterns through rhymes, poems, chants, and fingerplays • recognize voice tone as a way to express feeling **Fine Arts—Music:** *Music listening.* The student shall be provided opportunities to: • hear music for quiet listening • hear music that tells a story

Materials and Equipment

- Listening station
- Record player and/or cassette tape recorder
- Sets of books with tapes or records
- Paper or chart paper for language experience stories
- Story records and tapes
- Drawing paper and crayons

Learning Center

Teacher Additions or Modifications

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